

Message Text

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ACTION CU-06

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UNCLAS MANILA 1823

FOR: SECSTATE EA/PHL; CU/EA
USIA/IEA
CINCPAC - USIA ADVISOR

E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJ: WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS - JANUARY 27 - FEBRUARY 2

I. PSYCHOLOGICAL SITUATION

WITH THE ELECTION DATE FIRM FOR THE NEW INTERIM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (APRIL 2), MANEUVERING FOR AN ACCEPTABLE SET OF RULES GOVERNING THE CAMPAIGN HAS TEMPORARILY TAKEN THE SPOTLIGHT FROM THE JOCKEYING FOR POSITION OF PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES.

THE PRINCIPAL ISSUE AT STAKE IS WHETHER BLOCK VOTING (FOR SLATES OF PARTY CANDIDATES) WILL BE PERMITTED. THERE APPEARS TO BE LITTLE ENTHUSIASM FOR SUCH A TACTIC FROM EITHER SIDE OF THE POLITICAL FENCE, ALTHOUGH PRESIDENT MARCOS SEEMS FIRM IN HIS RESOLVE TO KEEP THIS CONTROVERSIAL PROVISION IN THE ELECTION

THE CHIEF DILEMMA FACING THE FORCES OPPOSED TO THE NEW SOCIETY IS WHETHER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTION AT ALL. THE REASONING GOES THAT BY PARTICIPATING, THEY GIVE TACIT APPROVAL TO THE LEGALITY OF THE MARCOS REGIME. YET, IF THEY DO NOT FIELD
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CANDIDATES, THEY RUN THE RISK OF BEING BRANDED AS MERELY OPPOSITIONISTS. ANOTHER DRAWBACK TO NOT PARTICIPATING IS THEY WOULD FORFEIT ANY MEMBERSHIP IN THE LEGISLATURE (FULLY KNOWING IT WOULD BE SMALL AT BEST) AND LOSE AN OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE A PUBLIC FORUM FOR THEIR VIEWS.

AS ANTICIPATED, THE US IS BEING DRAWN INTO THE CAMPAIGN EVEN

AT THIS STAGE. SOME OF THE EARLY BIRDS WHO HAVE ALREADY BEGUN THE CHASE FOR VOTES HAVE RAISED ISSUES RELATING TO THE U.S. MOST NOTABLY THUS FAR HAS BEEN THE SECRETARY OF LABOR, BLAS OPLE, WHO IS TALKING ABOUT USING A PORTION OF THE BASE LANDS TO BE TURNED OVER TO PHILIPPINE CONTROL FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT. IN ANOTHER INSTANCE, DETAILED PRIVATE TALKS ABOUT EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AT THE BASES HAS BEEN LEAKED TO THE PRESS. THESE AND OTHER ISSUES ARE BOUND TO SURFACE AS THE CAMPAIGN GETS INTO HIGH GEAR. IT IS NOT EXACTLY A COINCIDENCE THAT SECRETARY OPLE WILL BE RUNNING FOR A SLOT FROM THE REGION IN WHICH BOTH CLARK AND SUBIC ARE LOCATED.

IN A POSSIBLY RELATED MEDIA PROBLEM, THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE LETUP IN THE OBVIOUSLY CONCERTED CAMPAIGN TO DISCREDIT THE US PRESS AND BUSINESS AS A RESULT OF THE SERIES OF STORIES IN THE AMERICAN PRESS OVER THE WESTINGHOUSE NUCLEAR ARRANGEMENT AND THE SUBSEQUENT SPECULATION ABOUT MALACANANG INVOLVEMENT IN BUSINESS VENTURES. WHETHER THIS IS MERELY A DIVERSIONARY TACTIC OR A SINCERE BELIEF -- THAT US BUSINESS AND MEDIA ARE IN CAHOOTS TO UNDERMINE PHILIPPINE BUSINESS -- THE TONE AND VIGOR OF THE CAMPAIGN INDICATES IT WILL CONTINUE TO BE AN ISSUE.

II. SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

AMERICAN HANDICRAFTS ON DISPLAY -- THE "HANDICRAFTS USA" EXHIBIT IS PRESENTLY SHOWING SIMULTANEOUSLY AT TWO BRANCHES OF UNCLASSIFIED

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RUSTAN'S, ONE OF MANILA'S MORE PRESTIGIOUS DEPARTMENT STORES. THE EXHIBIT ITEMS WERE DIVIDED BETWEEN THE TWO STORES TO ALLOW GREATER EXPOSURE. RSC MANILA PRINTED 100,000 ATTRACTIVE BOOKMARKS WHICH BEAR THE EXHIBIT MOTIF AND OTHER PROMOTIONAL INFORMATION. ALSO NOTED IS THE SIMILARITY BETWEEN SOME OF THE ITEMS AND CRAFTS OF THE PHILIPPINES. THE BOOKMARKS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED AT RUSTAN'S, VARIOUS BOOKSTORES, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. USIS FILMS ARE ALSO BEING SHOWN AT BOTH SITES.

TOURING FULBRIGHTER -- FULBRIGHT PROFESSOR DR. FREDERICK

SONTAG'S PROGRAM HAS MOVED INTO HIGH GEAR AFTER A RATHER SLUGGISH BEGINNING (THE RESULT OF UNDERPROGRAMMING BY PAEF). HIS IMPACT, HOWEVER, HAS BEEN SIGNIFICANT AND UNIFORMLY POSITIVE ON THE MANILA AUDIENCES. SONTAG IS SLATED TO MAKE AN EXTENSIVE TOUR OF THE VISAYAS AND MINDANAO WHERE HE HAS A FULL SCHEDULE OF APPEARANCES WITH UNIVERSITY AND GOVERNMENT AUDIENCES.

AMBASSADOR NEWSOM AND AMERICAN BUSINESS - VIDEO FOOTAGE OF

AMBASSADOR NEWSOM'S CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SPEECH FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, WAS PROVIDED ON AN EXCLUSIVE BASIS TO GTV-4. CHANNEL 4 AIRED

THE SPEECH EXCERPTS TWICE ON SATURDAY, FOCUSING ESPECIALLY ON
THE SECTION WHICH DEALT WITH THE AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY'S
RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PHILIPPINES.
DAWSON

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Executive Order: N/A
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Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
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Subject: WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS - JANUARY 27 - FEBRUARY 2 I. PSYCHOLOGICAL SITUATION -----
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